

# Hilltops Medical Centre

## Inspection report

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Date of inspection visit: 23 June 2023 and 19  
October 2023  
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This report describes our judgement of the quality of care at this service. It is based on a combination of what we found when we inspected, information from our ongoing monitoring of data about services and information given to us from the provider, patients, the public and other organisations.

## Ratings

### Overall rating for this location

Requires Improvement



Are services safe?

Requires Improvement



Are services effective?

Good



Are services responsive to people's needs?

Requires Improvement



Are services well-led?

Good



# Overall summary

We carried out an announced focused inspection at Hilltops Medical Centre on 23 June 2023 and 19 October 2023. Overall, the practice is rated as requires improvement.

The ratings for each key question are:

Safe - requires improvement

Effective - good

Caring – not inspected, the rating of good is carried forward from our previous inspection

Responsive - requires improvement

Well-led – good

Following our previous inspection on 3 August 2021, the practice was rated good overall and for all key questions.

The full reports for previous inspections can be found by selecting the 'all reports' link for Hilltops Medical Centre on our website at [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk).

## Why we carried out this inspection

We inspected Hilltops Medical Centre as part of our regulatory functions under the Health and Social Care Act 2008. We carried out this inspection in response to risk and to follow-up on the areas identified at our last inspection where the provider should make improvements.

We looked at the safe, effective, responsive and well-led key questions for this inspection.

There was an unavoidable delay between inspection dates that did not have any negative impact on the inspection findings.

## How we carried out the inspection

This inspection was carried out in a way which enabled us to spend a minimum amount of time on site. This was with consent from the provider and in line with all data protection and information governance requirements.

This included:

- conducting staff interviews using video conferencing facilities
- completing clinical searches and reviewing patient records on the practice's patient records system to identify issues and clarify actions taken by the provider
- requesting evidence from the provider
- a site visit to Hilltops Medical Centre

# Overall summary

- requesting and reviewing feedback from staff and patients who work at or use the service.

## Our findings

We based our judgement of the quality of care at this service on a combination of:

- what we found when we inspected
- information from our ongoing monitoring of data about services and
- information from the provider, patients, the public and other organisations.

We found that:

- The provider had made improvements to areas we identified as needing improvement on our first visit in June, however these were not completed in full in all cases.
- The practice had systems and processes to keep people safe and safeguarded from abuse, in most cases.
- The practice's systems to assess, monitor and manage risks to patient safety were not always effective.
- Appropriate standards of cleanliness and hygiene were met.
- The practice had effective systems for the appropriate and safe use of medicines, including medicines optimisation.
- Patients received effective care and treatment that met their needs.
- Staff worked together and with other organisations to deliver care and treatment.
- Staff supported patients to live healthier lives.
- The practice organised and delivered services to meet patients' needs.
- People felt they were not always able to access care and treatment in a timely way.
- The practice had a culture which drove high quality sustainable care.
- The practice used data and information to support decision making.
- The practice involved the public, staff and external partners to sustain high quality and sustainable care.
- There were systems and processes for learning, continuous improvement and innovation.

We found 1 breach of regulation. The provider **must**:

- Provide care and treatment in a safe way for service users.

# Overall summary

More detail is contained in the requirement notice section at the end of this report.

We also found the following areas for improvement where the provider **should**:

- Continue to monitor and improve cervical screening and childhood immunisation uptake.
- Continue to embed the system to ensure continuous learning from complaints over time and information about the Parliamentary and Health Services Ombudsman is included in all complaint final response letters.
- Continue to monitor patient experience and access and take action to improve performance in relation to National GP Patient Survey data.

**Details of our findings and the evidence supporting our ratings are set out in the evidence tables.**

**Dr Sean O’Kelly BSc MB ChB MSc DCH FRCA**

Chief Inspector of Health Care

## Our inspection team

Our inspection in June 2023 was led by a CQC inspector. The inspection team included a member of the CQC medicines team and a GP specialist advisor. Inspectors spoke with staff using video conferencing facilities and all members of the inspection team undertook a site visit. The GP specialist advisor completed clinical searches and reviews of patient records before visiting the location.

Our inspection in October 2023 was led by a CQC lead inspector who spoke with staff using video conferencing facilities and undertook a site visit. The team included a GP specialist advisor who spoke with staff using video conferencing facilities and completed clinical searches and records reviews without visiting the location.

## Background to Hilltops Medical Centre

Hilltops Medical Centre is located in a purpose built health centre in a suburb of Milton Keynes at Hilltops Medical Centre, Kensington Drive, Great Holm, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK8 9HN.

There are no branch sites and the practice does not dispense medicines. There is an independent pharmacy located in the same building.

The provider is registered with CQC to deliver the following Regulated Activities: diagnostic and screening procedures, family planning, maternity and midwifery services, surgical procedures and the treatment of disease, disorder or injury.

The practice is situated within the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board (ICB) and delivers General Medical Services (GMS) to a patient population of approximately 16,000. This is part of a contract held with NHS England.

The practice is part of a wider network of GP practices known as the Watling Street Primary Care Network (PCN). The PCN includes 3 providers of GP services working together to address local priorities in patient care.

Information published by Office for Health Improvement and Disparities shows that deprivation within the practice population group is in the ninth lowest decile (9 of 10). The lower the decile, the more deprived the practice population is relative to others.

According to the latest available data, the ethnic make-up of the practice area is 77% White, 12% Asian, 6% Black, 4% Mixed, and 1% Other.

The age distribution of the practice population broadly follows the local and national averages.

The clinical team at the practice includes 6 GP partners, 1 salaried GP, 2 advanced nurse practitioners, 1 practice nurse, 2 trainee practice nurses, 1 clinical pharmacist, 1 paramedic, 1 nurse associate and 3 healthcare assistants.

Non-clinical staff include a team of reception and administration staff. The managing partner, deputy practice manager, operations manager and reception manager provide managerial oversight.

The PCN employs a variety of staff who support patients of Hilltops Medical Centre and the other 2 practices in the network. These staff include a community support team nurse, a minor illness nurse, an occupational therapist, a mental health practitioner, a podiatrist, a health and wellbeing coach, a social worker, a social prescriber link worker, a clinical pharmacist and a first contact practitioner.

Hilltops Medical Centre is part of the Milton Keynes Collaboration of GP practices, which provides extended access services for 22 GP practices. This service, known as Enhanced Access, provides appointments with GPs, clinical pharmacists, a paramedic, a nurse, a healthcare assistant or a physiotherapist outside of the practice's normal working hours. Hilltops Medical Centre also hosts the PCN extended access clinics on Saturdays.

The practice is open between 8am and 6.30pm on Mondays and Fridays and between 7am and 6.30pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

When the practice is closed, patients are directed to access support, treatment and advice from the NHS 111 service or the emergency services.

Patients can book appointments online, or by telephoning or visiting the practice.

The practice offers a range of appointment types including face-to-face, telephone and video consultations, online consultations and home visits.

The practice offers urgent, or 'same day', appointments and patients can pre-book routine appointments, with a clinician of their choice, upto 4 to 6 weeks in advance.

Patients can ask for prescriptions online or by telephoning or visiting the practice.

This section is primarily information for the provider

## Requirement notices

### Action we have told the provider to take

The table below shows the legal requirements that were not being met. The provider must send CQC a report that says what action they are going to take to meet these requirements.

Regulated activity	Regulation
Diagnostic and screening procedures	<p>Regulation 12 HSCA (RA) Regulations 2014 Safe care and treatment</p> <p>There were no systems or processes that enabled the registered person to assess, monitor and mitigate the risks relating to the health, safety and welfare of service users and others who may be at risk. In particular:</p> <p>The practice did not follow their staff immunisation policy and did not have records of both clinical and non-clinical staff vaccinations for all staff members in line with national guidance.</p> <p>The practice did not have a safe system in place to ensure the recommended use by date for medical products and consumables was appropriately managed.</p> <p>The system that enabled the registered person to ensure that all locum staff members had completed mandatory training relevant to their role was not comprehensive.</p> <p>The practice did not always follow their significant events policy when an incident or near miss had occurred.</p> <p>This was in breach of Regulation 12 (1) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.</p>
Family planning services	
Maternity and midwifery services	
Surgical procedures	
Treatment of disease, disorder or injury	